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numbers is especially intended to secure fairness ; it is more difficult to calculate the result. For a like reason, the practice of successive exclusions is adopted. We do not say the childish habit *may* not have arisen from a serious superstition, but we fail to find evidence that it has so arisen. The meaningless form of the rhymes would be the natural result of transference from language to language, and of time.

We hope that Mr. Bolton's little book will receive such welcome as may induce him to continue his collecting and complete his census. The form of this exquisite quarto, of which only a limited number of copies are printed, is sumptuous ; and our only regret is that an American student should be still obliged to go to England in order to procure the publication of his researches.

W. W. N.

STUDIES ON THE LEGEND OF THE HOLY GRAIL, WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE HYPOTHESIS OF ITS CELTIC ORIGIN. By ALFRED NUTT. London : David Nutt, 270-1 Strand. 1888. 8vo, pp. x, 281.

Mr. Nutt's work is the first serious attempt of an English scholar to deal with the complicated problems connected with the origin and relations of the mediæval romances which treat of the Grail. Beside original discussions, he gives valuable summaries of these romances (pp. 8-64) and an elaborate bibliography of researches (pp. 97-126). The last chapter contains an examination of the story from an æsthetic point of view.

Mr. Nutt is an advocate of the theory of Celtic origin, originally proposed by Villemarqué, but since generally discredited. His views are briefly as follows : In the early Middle Age existed a Welsh tale of a hero Peredur (Perceval of French romance). This story was made up of preëxisting mythic elements. One of these was, to use Mr. Nutt's language, a form of the "Aryan Expulsion and Return formula ;" that is, a tale of a hero whose father is slain, who is brought up in the wilderness, is of a passionate temper, and finally recovers his inheritance. A second element was a myth of a visit to the Land of Shades, which became the story of an enchanted castle. In this castle the hero is to deliver a kinsman, is under certain restrictions, and reminded of his duty by certain talismans. One of the latter, a magic vessel of healing, became at last the Holy Grail. Of the Peredur-Saga there were three versions : one was embodied in the English romance of the Thornton MS. (Sir Perceval of Galles), a second formed the basis of the Welsh tale of Peredur contained in the Mabinogion of Lady Guest, a third served as the material of the French romancers. Of these latter Crestien de Troies is the oldest, but his continuator, Gautier de Douzens (or Gaucher de Dourdan, as G. Paris prefers), more nearly represents the original narrative. In this third form the Celtic Saga had already been christianized, having been united with a legend relative to the conversion of Britain. Hence the romances of Joseph of Arimathea, as well as of the Queste and the Grand St. Graal, in which Perceval, for purposes of monastic piety, is succeeded by the later hero Galahad. "The history of the legend of the Holy Grail is, thus, 'the history of the gradual transformation of old Celtic folk-tales into a poem charged with Christian symbolism and mysticism.'"

Mr. Nutt did not have access to the essay of G. Paris, "*Les Romans en Vers du Cycle de la Table Ronde*," which is to form part of the 30th volume of the "*Histoire Littéraire de la France*." In this treatise (now before us in a separate form) M. Paris, discussing briefly the English minstrel poem, concludes that this represents the oldest form of the story, which was thus a biographical narration; "the hero, orphaned by a murder, and whom his mother endeavors to withdraw from his true destiny, succeeds in accomplishing it, avenges his father, consoles his mother, and marries the young girl whom he has delivered, and who brings him a kingdom." Crestien's romance is derived from a similar poem, mingled with the story of the Grail; the Welsh *Mabinogi* of *Peredur* had a like source.

Mr. Nutt, on the other hand, is in our opinion quite right in pointing out the influence of Crestien on both the English poem and the Welsh tale. This being granted, further investigation becomes exceedingly difficult. When an attempt is made to recover an original tradition from an account confessedly derived in part from another work, we are of necessity led into a field of delicate critical inquiries, in which probabilities are often so nicely balanced as to make it very improbable that different minds can be led to an agreement. If the authors of the English minstrel poem and the Welsh story (the latter, in our opinion, a literary production, not a popular tale) have used Crestien, it becomes very difficult to prove that the changes they have made in the story are not the result of pure invention. In spite of the authority of both Mr. Nutt and M. Paris, the present writer believes that such a view may still be maintained.

However this may hereafter prove to be, Mr. Nutt is entitled to honor for producing a work of learning, written with full knowledge of what has been accomplished by Continental scholars, and which will be of the greatest utility to students who may desire to pursue the investigation. The book is issued to members of the (English) Folk-Lore Society as one of the volumes for the year, but may also be procured independently, a limited number of copies being placed on the market.

W. W. N.

THE EARLIEST ENGLISH VERSION OF THE FABLES OF BIDPAI, "*The Morall Philosophie of Doni*," by Sir THOMAS NORTH, whilom of Peterhouse, Cambridge. Now again edited and induced by JOSEPH JACOBS, late of St. John's College, Cambridge. London: Published by David Nutt in the Strand. 1888. 8vo, pp. lxxxii, 264. With full-page Illustration by EDWARD BURNE JONES, A. R. A.; frontispiece from a 16th century MS. of Firdusi, and facsimiles of woodcuts in the Italian *Doni* of 1532.

In the first number of this journal we gave a brief notice of Adlington's version of "*Cupid and Psyche*," edited by Mr. Lang for the "*Bibliothèque de Carabas*," published by David Nutt, of London. It was proposed to issue in this collection English translations made in the sixteenth century of works interesting to the student of folk-lore. The "*Cupid and Psyche*" was followed by "*Euterpe: Being the Second Book of the Famous History of Herodotus, Englished by R. B. 1584*." Edited by Andrew Lang, with introductory Essays on the Religion and the good Faith of Herodotus." The